

John's Story

I was introduced to John at the UAHC Biennial. He and his lover Herb had met at a party in the Village in the late '60s. They dated for a while, fell in love, and began to make a life together. That life included the creation of a Jewish home, one in which Shabbat and the holidays were celebrated with family and friends, one filled with Jewish books and music, and Jewish values.

About 10 years ago, Herb and John moved from Manhattan to the suburbs for business reasons. Much to their surprise, they loved small-town life. Regular synagogue attendance was part of their lives, so as soon as they were unpacked, they began to "temple shop." One synagogue in particular appealed to them, partly because of the welcome they received, partly because the synagogue had been among the first to hire a woman cantor.

The two men quickly became active in their new congregation, chairing committees, teaching in the religious school, schlepping canned goods for the food drive, hosting their chavurah for "First Wednesday Dinner." They were accepted, they thought, as a family. Not once did John or Herb hear a homophobic remark made about any lesbian or gay man. They were even carried on the temple roll as a family unit, and paid family dues. In all respects they were treated as any heterosexual couple would be treated — until their 20th anniversary.

It is the practice of their temple to honor couples on their anniversaries. On the Shabbat nearest the anniversary date, the couple is asked to stand, the rabbi blesses them, and the congregation acknowledges their simcha with a happy outpouring of mazel tovs.

The special date came for Herb and John — and passed. They were not honored in the synagogue. Nothing was

said at all. And so they spoke to the rabbi.

"Yes, of course, you should be honored," they were told, "but we have to go about this slowly, carefully. Give me time to work on the board."

Months passed, and still nothing. The 21st anniversary was approaching, but there was not indication that this would be treated any differently than the 20th. So John decided to "go to the top." He spoke to Al Vorspan, vice president of the UAHC, who encouraged him to raise the issue at the Biennial. This John did, first at a panel discussion of lesbian and gay issues, then at a plenary session, speaking on behalf of a resolution encouraging all synagogues to welcome gay people to full participation in congregational life.

Both times John was eloquent and persuasive. Both times Herb was there, smiling up at him as he spoke. On the convention floor, John captured the delegates' attention immediately. "Hineini!" he began. "Here I am, a Reform Jew committed to the ideals of our movement and to the teachings of our prophets, and a gay man who has chosen to join a mainstream synagogue. In many ways my lover and I have been welcomed into our congregational family. But when the time came to share the joy of the 20th anniversary of our relationship, the 'family' was not there for us, and we were deeply hurt. Those of us who are lesbian or gay want no special privileges or consideration," he continued, "only the privileges and consideration offered every other member of the synagogue. We ask for nothing more. We will accept nothing less!"

There was loud applause. Overcome by emotion, John sat down in tears. Herb held him tight, and the rest of us, his new friends, gathered close to offer support.

(continued on page 7)

CSZ and the Torah Commentary

In 1981, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations published a new translation of the Torah, with an extensive commentary by Rabbis Bamberger and Plaut. In many ways, it was an amazing piece of work: the first contemporary Jewish commentary on the Torah. Unfortunately, a discussion of homosexuality in the commentary on Leviticus, Chapter 18, although perhaps well-meant, was factually inaccurate and patronizing in tone. Worse, it perpetuated some of the most harmful myths about gay people.

Later that year, in New York, Mike Rankin of CSZ met with UAHC Vice President Rabbi Leonard Schoolman. Rabbi Schoolman agreed that the Leviticus commentary was problematic and suggested that it be revised for the second edition. Mike, along with CSZ members Aaron Cooper, Betty Kalis and Garry Koenigsberg, submitted a rewritten version, and the UAHC editorial board accepted it. It's wonderful that the UAHC responds to the concerns of its members.

The new edition of *The Torah — A Modern Commentary* is now in the bookstores, and would make an important addition to every Jewish home. Sha'ar Zahav can feel a special pride in the knowledge that we helped make it the splendid work it is.



Leaders & Process

The Va'ad (Board of Directors) of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav consists of the four officers, plus nine members elected at large. Only a short time ago, 13 people meant about 10 percent of our entire membership; but in the past few years, we have grown so rapidly that now the board is only 3 percent of our total number of members. This rapid growth has led to members and leaders not knowing each other, as well as members being unfamiliar with how decisions are made at Sha'ar Zahav, and how new ideas are translated into action.

A 400-member synagogue generates ideas and challenges every day. We each have a natural inclination to think about ways of implementing our ideas or solving problems that we see. Sometimes we tend to see difficulties as caused by our leaders, and sometimes we tend to see lack of action on ideas, or absence of immediate solutions to problems, as reflecting incompetence or uncaring at leadership levels. These negative notions are wrong. Officers, members of the Va'ad, committee chairs, and other leaders in our temple are highly committed. They spend an enormous amount of time and energy on our ideas, challenges and problems. If we hope to support our leaders and develop new ones, we must approach our current leaders with the understanding that they are part of the process, not the problem.

"Process" is the way we get things done. Most synagogue work is done at the committee level, so new ideas and suggestions for solutions to problems ideally should first be presented there. For example, many of us are concerned about the crowding at High Holy Day services; some of us have ideas for solutions. The Ritual Committee is the correct place to begin to explore them. Some people have noticed that on rainy days the foundation is leaking into the breezeway. The Building Committee is the place to express your concern and to explore having the leak repaired. Perhaps you have an idea for a party or an event of some kind. This is the work of the Social Program Committee. Whatever your idea or suggestion, there is a best or most efficient place to begin, be it with a committee, the treasurer, the president, or some other leader. Policy

matters and all major decisions are handled by the Va'ad. One or more members of the board are present to greet worshippers every Friday night and will be happy to get to know you.

Because our process is democratic, it can be slow; but this is no reason to be discouraged. A few years ago one member had an idea that we could produce a cookbook, benefit the Food Bank of the AIDS Foundation, and even make some money for the synagogue. The idea involved a large investment of time and money, and so it was very slowly and carefully explored. Susan Unger presented a detailed plan, including a budget, to the president, other leaders, and the Va'ad. The gestation period of the project was many months, but, as we all know, it has been a success beyond our most optimistic expectations.

As I enter the second half of my term as president, one thing has become very clear to me. Everything that happens at Sha'ar Zahav is the proper concern of each one of us. Together we can spot our problems and challenges, and find creative solutions to them. As a family we can explore new ideas, and mold them into realities. We are blessed with talented and dedicated leaders and a process that works. When we use it carefully we can succeed in helping Sha'ar Zahav flourish and grow, and to serve the community and us, its members, well.

—Richard Inlander, President

Election Committee Formed

At its January meeting, the Va'ad approved the appointment of this year's Election Committee: Allan Gold, Leslie Bergson, Ora Prochovnik, Nancy Snow, and Ed Tanovitz. The committee will publish a list of qualifications, and draw up a slate of recommended candidates. Elections of officers and Va'ad members will take place at the annual meeting in May.

Naches

Mazel tov to members **Shelley Adler** and **Sue Weinstein** who celebrated their *kuddushin* (union) on December 28 at CSZ.

Congratulations to **Neil Hart** on his exhibition of photographs this month at U.C. Extension in San Francisco.

We'd all like to share in the *naches* of members of our Sha'ar Zahav family. If you or someone you know has something special to share with *Forward* readers, please contact the synagogue office.

The Jewish Gaily Forward is published 11 times annually by Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, (415) 861-6932. Permission to reproduce non-copyrighted material is freely given, and credit would be appreciated.

Members of the Congregation receive the *Forward*. For a donation of \$12/year, non-members will receive the *Forward*.

All newsletter copy should be typed, double-spaced and is due no later than the date of the Va'ad meeting. It should be sent to the synagogue office, marked to the attention of the *Forward*.

Members of the Newsletter Committee are Bob Goldware (Articles Coordinator), Peter Vishniac (Advertising Coordinator), Howard Blechman, Stephanie Hannaford, Alex Ingersoll, Garry Koenigsberg, Alita Rosenfeld and David Stein (general editorial and production); Amy Blasenheim (photos); Frank Hyman, Ben Schalit, Sam Thal and Eli Weinstein (distribution). The *Forward* is typeset by David Lester, Pagesetter Typography and printed by Lou Greene.

Display Ads are \$15 per column inch for non-members and \$10 per column inch for members, with discounts available for size and frequency. Ads should be camera ready; any ads that require typesetting, camera and/or artwork will be subject to a one-time production charge.

Classified Ads are \$5 for up to 20 words, plus \$1 for each 10 additional words. No personals accepted.

Payment must accompany ad and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, marked attention *Forward* advertising. The advertising deadline is the 10th of the month. The *Forward* reserves the right to reject any ad for reasons of taste. For more information on advertising rates and charges, call Peter Vishniac at 553-8676.

Va'ad Report

On Monday, January 11, the Board of Directors of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav held its monthly meeting, called to order by President Richard Inlander. Rabbi Yoel Kahn invited those present to consider the following prayer from Sha'ar Zahav's Shabbat morning prayerbook. He suggested that we think about how it applies to ourselves and to other people:

My God, I thank you for my life and my soul and my body; for my name, for my sexual and affectional nature, for my way of thinking and talking. Help me realize that in my qualities I am unique in the world, and that no one like me has ever lived: for if there had ever before been someone like me, I would not have needed to exist. Help me make perfect my own ways of love and caring, that by becoming perfect in my own way, I can honor Your name, and help bring about the coming of Redemption.

Richard introduced Jenny Helbraun, our new office manager, who was attending Sha'ar Zahav's board meeting for the first time. In his report, UAHC liaison Mike Rankin requested the Va'ad to appoint a member of the congregation to attend the first meeting of the UAHC Regional AIDS Committee, at Temple Emanu-El, February 4, at 7:30 p.m. All those interested are invited to join Richard, who stated he would represent Sha'ar Zahav at the meeting.

Rabbi Kahn reported that he has been appointed to the Executive Board of the Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis. He also described the formation of a support group for sero-positive people who do not have AIDS or ARC. After discussion, the Va'ad approved the concept of the congregation's sponsorship of such a group, and will hear a detailed report from the Rabbi at the February meeting.

Treasurer Eric Keitel presented the monthly statement for December, which reflected various aspects of Sha'ar Zahav's finances including cookbook sales. Paul Cohen then delivered a report from the Cookbook Marketing Committee of which he is now the chair. He described a proposal to print 5000 more copies of the wildly successful Sha'ar Zahav Cookbook, *Out of Our Kitchen Closets*. Because of the many details involved in an undertaking of this magnitude, the Va'ad discussed this idea at length, and will resume discus-

sion at its next meeting, after a further committee report.

At Richard's suggestion, the Va'ad approved Sunday, May 15 as the date of the congregation's Annual Meeting. The Va'ad also approved Richard's proposed of new Elections Committee members.

The Va'ad unanimously approved the motion of Betty Kalis to delegate to the Rabbi the authority to make expenditures from the AIDS Fund, which is more and more often being used to assist members of the congregation who have AIDS and are in need.

Robin Leonard, chair of the Membership Committee, announced that after a gradual transition Merry Luskin will take over as chair of the committee. Robin also presented nine membership applications, which were unanimously approved. Also approved was Garry Koenigsberg's motion that the Va'ad thank Robin enthusiastically, accompanied by the applause and cheers of those present.

Steve Greenberg gave his report as chair of the Ritual Committee. The Va'ad approved the committee's suggestion that two more Children's Services be held, one on February 19 and another in May or June. The Va'ad also discussed ideas for Purim (Wednesday, March 2) and plans for the Congregational Seder.

Paul Cohen, reporting as chair of the Bikkur Cholim Committee, described the success of the Kaiser AIDS Brunch Program, in which many members have participated. The Va'ad allocated \$100 to augment the donations by participants in the January brunch; the committee will present ideas on continuing the program at a future meeting.

All of us who were there were glad to have survived the very tough agenda, but despite the late hour sang *Oseh Shalom* joyfully to end the meeting.

—Ben Schalit, Recorder

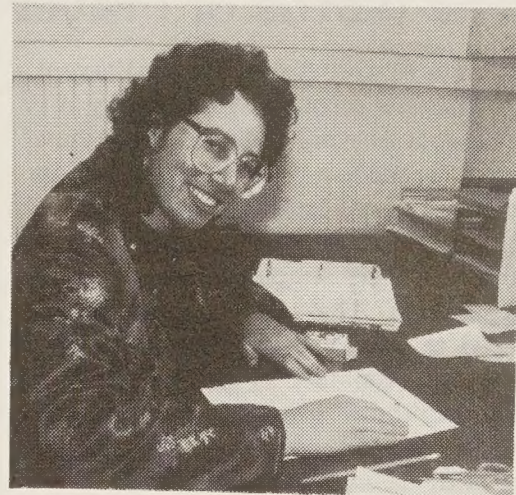
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Anniversaries

- | | |
|----|---|
| 8 | David Pierce & Nic Lawson |
| 10 | Robert Nacamulli & Lorraine Locke-Nacamulli |
| 23 | Yael Silverberg & Luana Willis |

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Meet Jenny



Jenny Helbraun, our new office co-manager, came to us by accident! Disability from severe whiplash suffered in an auto accident turned her to the Jewish Vocational Services, where she learned of the opening in our synagogue office.

Growing up in a Reform Jewish household in Monsey, N.Y., the center of the Satmer Hasidic community, Jenny learned Jewish activism from her parents. She eventually moved out west, where she worked at carpentry to support her desire to be an artist, working with photo-silkscreens. But in the back of her mind gnawed the desire for something more — an involvement with organized Judaism.

So Jenny became a teacher of peer counseling, and taught classes on leading Jewish support groups. Then she enrolled at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, where she is currently a student in the Master in Jewish Studies program.

In working with Jacqueline Letalien in the synagogue office, Jennie has finally achieved her goal of having Judaism play a central role in her life. We wish her well.

—Howard Blechman

Wednesday, March 2

Purim
at the Shul

7:30 pm

The Words of Prayer

Our liturgy reminds us of two different dimensions of ourselves: who we are and what we would be. At Sha'ar Zahav, we have made a number of changes in the traditional liturgy to make it more closely reflect "who we are." Some of these are very simple; others are more significant. The earliest new liturgy used at our congregation emphasized our new visibility as gay and lesbian Jews, in contrast to the previous centuries of invisibility. An example is the reading in our Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat service which includes the comment: "It can be hard to be gay in a straight world." A number of people have commented to me that they do not find this sentence meaningful; they feel that they are completely integrated and accepted in the *entire* community. Although not all of us can say this, this reading does not have the impact today it did 10 years ago.

Most of our new readings are in addition to the traditional liturgy — not a replacement of it. Our prayer for our "gay and lesbian siblings throughout the ages" reminds us of who we are — a congregation whose members enjoy diverse sexualities with a special mission to the needs of gay and lesbian Jews — and what we hope for — "an end to hate and oppression of every kind." This passage, which resonates with traditional Jewish prayer and speaks directly to our own unique history, moves me week after week.

How we imagine and speak about God reflects how we conceive of ourselves — because the route to holiness is to be God-like. One of the earliest feminist criticisms of patriarchy was its exclusive emphasis on the male-ness of the "Holy One." The Source of All of course both includes and is beyond all limitations and labels which we can invent. But because language is limiting, we necessarily employ the metaphors that our language allows us. We are accustomed to using "She" as an alternative to "He" — but are reluctant to replace "Lord" or "Master" with "Mistress" (at least I am!). At Sha'ar Zahav, we generally seek to avoid gender-specific nouns in order to avoid this difficulty.

The problem for me is not just one of

language but of the *metaphor* itself. I do not want to replace the "King of the Universe" with the "Queen" — I do not think of myself as a subject to a monarch. The metaphor of sovereignty does not accurately reflect how we see ourselves or what we hope to become. Nor do I think that God's sanctity is diminished if we seek other metaphors to describe our relationship.

Poet and liturgist Marcia Falk has composed many beautiful and intensely rich new blessings which are the groundwork for a totally new liturgy. We used Marcia Falk's text for Havdalah at the "March on Washington" and I have rapidly become attached to several other of her new prayer texts. These new texts — and others now circulating in the community — reflect and expand my conceptions of ourselves. God and Jewish prayer.

Much as I like them, though, I hesitate to use these new texts. Much of the power of the traditional liturgy for us derives from its history. These are the same prayers which previous generations of Jews have used. Even if we change a few words, we usually strive to keep the form of the prayer. Further, we share our liturgy with the rest of the Jewish people. It is inspiring to me to visit a synagogue in another country, with a different native language, and to be able to join the congregation in prayer. I am reluctant to stray too far from the rest of the Jewish community.

Many of you share my desires: for a liturgy which speaks out of our own history and experience, and for the need to maintain continuity with the traditional forms of Jewish prayer. At Sha'ar Zahav, we pride ourselves on building a community which celebrates diversity. As a congregation, we often set the same words to different melodies — and take pleasure in the new and changing form the same prayer can assume. It is my prayer that we can embrace the same acceptance and diversity in the words and language of our prayers — supporting one another in a common reaching out towards One who sings and speaks to us in an infinite variety of ways.

—Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Learning to Live a Jewish Life

Connection with community, God and the Jewish people is a central theme in Judaism. This connection — or covenant — is achieved by participating in Jewish rituals and is the topic of Sha'ar Zahav's upcoming winter/spring class: "Jewish Lifecycle: Covenant and Commitment."

The class will examine the history and traditional customs of Jewish lifecycle ceremonies. It will be divided into three sections of three weeks each: *Entering the Covenant* — ceremonies of brit and bar/bat mitzvah; *Expressing the Covenant* — ceremonies of union; and *Affirming the Covenant* — rituals of death and mourning. In addition to studying existing rituals, class members will develop new ones suitable for who we are and the Jewish lives we live today.

The class will meet on Tuesday evenings from 7:45 to 9:30 pm beginning February 16 at the synagogue. The course schedule is as follows:

- Entering the Covenant — February 23
- Expressing the Covenant — March 22
- Affirming the Covenant — April 12

The class is free to synagogue members; cost for non-members is \$25 per section or \$60 for all three sections. Call the synagogue office at 861-6932 to register and obtain more information.

HIV-Positive Support

A 10-week support group for CSZ members who have tested positive for HIV antibodies will begin on Monday, March 7 at the home of Rabbi Yoel Kahn. This group is for people who are antibody positive but have not been diagnosed with AIDS/ARC. The group will meet every other week on Monday evenings from 8 to 9:30 pm. The group will be facilitated by Rabbi Kahn and Nina Raff, social work intern at Jewish Family and Children's Services, under the joint sponsorship of CSZ and Jewish Emergency Assistance Network's AIDS Project. If you would like to attend the group or have any questions, please call Rabbi Kahn at the synagogue office.

FEBRUARY

שבט-אדר

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	13 Shevat 1	14 2	15 3	16 4	17 5	18 6
		Newsletter Comm., 140 Ord, 7:30pm			Services, 8:15pm	
19 7	20 8	21 9	22 10	23 11	24 12	25 13
	Va'ad Meeting, 6:30pm Newsletter Deadline		Soviet Vigil, Green & Baker, 11:30am	Social Action Comm., 7:30pm	Services, 8:15pm	Children's Havurah, Havdallah potluck, 658-8713, 4:30pm
26 14	27 15	28 16	29 17	30 18	1 Adar 19	2 20
Ensemble Rehearsal, 4pm		Education Night, 7:45pm		Bikkur Cholim Comm., 7:30pm	Rosh Chodesh Children's Service, 7:30pm Services, 8:30pm	
3 21	4 22	5 23	6 24	7 25	8 26	9 27
		Education Night, 7:45pm	Newsletter Mailing, 11 Grandview Terr., 7:30 pm	Ritual Comm., 6:30pm	Services, 8:15pm	Morning Service, 10:30am
10 28	11 29					
Kaiser Brunch, 10:30am Ensemble Rehearsal, 4pm						

Ritual Calendar

Friday, February 5

Parshah: Yitro
Garry Koenigsberg & David Stein

Friday, February 12

Shabbat Shekalim
Parshah: Mishpatim
Rabbi Yoel Kahn
The Torah will be read.

FFriday, February 19

Parshah: Terumah
Children's Service, 7:30 pm
Rabbi Yoel Kahn
Service, 8:30 pm
Daniel Chesir

Friday, February 26

Shabbat Zachor
Parshah: Tetzaveh
Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Saturday, February 27

Saturday morning services, 10:30 am
Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Wednesday, March 2

Erev Purim Services, 7:30 pm
Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Friday, March 4

Parshah: Ki Tissa
Garry Koenigsberg

Friday, March 11

Shabbat Parah
Parshah: Vayekhel/Pekudei
Rabbi Yoel Kahn

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New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained several new members in January. A warm welcome to the latest people to join our family:

Claudia Bernard

Sanford Friedman & Jerome Hipps

Susan Greenwald & Reuben

Jeffrey Miller

Oren Postrel

JoAnne & Leslie Rome

Gary Sokol & Paul Blanc

Sandy Stone & Tani Thole

Jane Suskin

New members are welcomed and honored at Friday night services on the last Friday of the month. By making them feel a part of our family, we can all help to show our new members that they have a valuable place at Sha'ar Zahav.

Starlight Express Revisited

Sha'ar Zahav's Chanukah party this year was something special! Rosalinda del Moral was the energetic chair of the planning committee, which chose the Lake Merced Boathouse as the perfect setting for an afternoon event which even our youngest members could attend. The facilities also allowed the planning committee to spend much of the afternoon enjoying the party, rather than being pre-occupied with making it happen.

Our thanks to all the members of the committee, which included Bill Ashley-Dobbin, Kenneth Burke, Alan Craig, Mark Freeman, Gary Glasser, Jane Graeven, Susan Greenspan, Alex Ingersoll, Eric Keitel, Allyce Kimerling, Kipp Leyser, Francie McGowan, Irene Ogus, Ben Schalit, Randy Schiller, Michelle Sullivan and Shana Winokur.

George Lucas coordinated latke production, with latkes being fried all around the Bay Area, principally in the kitchens of Bill Ashley-Dobbin, Lennie Brill, Paul Cohen, Steve Elman, David Gass, Allan Gold, Frank Hyman, Robin Leonard, Gordon Osser, Arthur Seidman, David Stein, Rebecca Swisher, Susan Unger and Judy. Thanks to all our chefs.

The afternoon's events including storytelling by Mark Freeman, as well as a special children's program by Arina the Clown. Additional entertainment was provided by Shana Winokur, with Mantra Ben-Ya'akov and her Bolshevik Cabaret bringing down the house.

Big winners in the annual Chanukah raffle included Michael Bettinger and Robert Goldstein, \$500 cash; Walt Leiss, microwave; Allan Blumenfeld, compact disc player; Yolanda Lopez, San Diego plane tickets; Hal Podgur, weekend at Le Meridien; and Lynn Wolf, two nights at the Willow Retreat.

In addition to the raffle, there was heavy bidding on the Silent Auction for goods and services ranging from dinners to legal services to crystal vases.

Business donors to the raffle, silent auction and party included Animal Company, Bredwell-Meyer Florist, Friedman's Microwave, the Great Frame Up, High Gear, Le Domino Restaurant, Le Meridien, On the Rack, One Stop Party Shop, Pier One, PSA, Sweet Sue's, Whole Earth Access and the Willow Retreat.

Individual donors included Bill Ashley-Dobbin, Jay Davidson, Rosalinda del Moral, Daryl Edwards, Betty Estelle, Rena Frantz, Ralph Frischman, Mark Graeven, Susan Greenspan, Marjorie Hillsenrod, Alex Ingersoll & David Stein, Allyce Kimerling, Shirley Liberman, Merry Luskin, Francie McGowan, Marilyn Miller, David Nahmoud, Bernard Pechter, Mike Rankin, Ora Prochovnik, Jerry Rosenstein, Arthur Seidman, Sen Talley, Dana Vinicoff, Shana Winokur, and Alan Young.

Our thanks to all who made our afternoon overlooking the lake so enjoyable.

Super Sunday Celebration

The CSZ's contingent at the Jewish Community Federation annual telethon will be headed by Jose Luis Moscovich and Nathan Robinson. If you would like to join our group on March 6 to help raise funds for Jewish Community activities in San Francisco, Marin and the Peninsula, contact Jose Luis (864-5331) or Nathan (621-7561). There's lots to do, from direct telephone solicitation to writing thank-you notes. CSZ benefits from the many activities supported by the Federation, and this is a chance to contribute to its support.

Contributions

Sha'ar Zahav welcomes all contributions, of all sizes, to mark any event, and to any of our funds. Contributions will be acknowledged in the *Forward* unless requested otherwise.

Donations were made to Sha'ar Zahav's funds in past months by the following contributors:

General Fund

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mackler, wishing CSZ a happy Chanukah

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Tom Rothgiesser's father

Dale Koppel

Alex Ingersoll & David Stein, in honor of Rosalinda del Moral, the Chanukah committee & Mantra Ben Ya'akov

Walt Leiss

Ami Zusman, toward Cheryl Orvis' recovery

AIDS Fund

Sanford Friedman

Steve Elman, in memory of George, friend of Jonathan Schwartz

Walt Leiss, in honor of his brother Albert's recovery from surgery

Ami Zusman

Howard Blechman, in honor of his parents' 50th anniversary

Building Fund

Steve Elman, in honor of David Gellman

Dan Chesir

Charles Norton

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John's Story

(continued from page 1)

Two college-age delegates, representing Reform programs on the campuses, walked over to say thank you.

While others rose to speak in favor of the "welcoming" resolution (it passed by a wide margin), John's rabbi sat in the seat beside him and put his arm on John's shoulder. "I'm sorry, John," he said. "It'll be different now."

A few weeks ago I got a card from Herb and John. On the Shabbat following the convention, the two of them were invited to stand before the Ark and were honored, with several heterosexual couples, on their 21st anniversary. There have been at least three similar occurrences since November, where gay or lesbian couples in other congregations were similarly honored. In every case, the rabbi or the congregation president was there the morning John spoke.

It only takes one — one individual with commitment, passion and courage — to begin the process of healing.

(But of course, if you also have a little chutzpah, so much the better!)

—Mike Rankin

Office Notes

Scheduling: Members and committee chairs who are scheduling meetings or other activities at the synagogue should call the synagogue office to reserve the space you want. With an increasing number of rentals and member activities taking place at the *shul*, it is necessary to reserve the space before you publicize your event or you may be in trouble! Please don't wait until conflicts emerge: call to reserve your space as soon as you know when you'll want it.

Volunteers for the synagogue office: We invite congregation members to become involved in the day-to-day support of the synagogue by volunteering in our office on an on-call and/or regular basis. We need help with mailings, errands and various fascinating light clerical work and projects. Benefits: a good cause, great company and a grand overview of the goings-on at CSZ. To become a part of it, call the synagogue office.

—Jenny Helbruan



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A Pinch of Errata

Despite five proofreadings, errors in four recipes got by us! Please make the following changes in your copy of *Out of Our Kitchen Closets*.

Page 62: Spinach Dip. Add 2 cups sour cream to list of ingredients.

Page 101: Braided Challah. In Step Five, refrigerating the dough for four to seven hours is mandatory, not optional as stated. In the final step, baking time should range from 20 to 40 minutes, depending on the oven and the size of the loaves.

Page 186: Carrot Pudding. In Step Three, add the oven temperature of 375 degrees.

Page 188: Trifle Orvis. In Step Two, add this sentence: "Fold the whipped cream into chilled pudding mixture."

So Ask Aunt Yente

Dear Aunt Yente,

I wanted to make sure you would answer my letter, so I tried to think of a question you couldn't refuse. Could you talk about the special foods that are eaten on Shabat?

Hungry on Holloway

Dear Hungry,

So how did you guess that Aunt Yente especially loves questions about Shabbos? So of course she will answer. But if you're worried about your letter getting Aunt Yente's attention, you could always enclose in the envelope maybe a small lukshen kügel.

Shabbos is a Jewish holiday, no? So can you think of any Jewish holiday without special food? Of course not. And on Shabbos, our most important and best-loved holiday, of course we eat as part of the celebrating. But Jews are *takke* all over the world, and in Peking is different Shabbos food than in Miami. Aunt Yente and her hips know best our food from eastern Europe, so this she'll talk about here.

She will start with Friday night, with kiddush and the two loaves of challah. Kiddush is made over delicious wine (or sometimes over what we use). On the table are two challahs. Although the yellow egg bread we call challah (which means simply "cake") you can eat any time, it is especially nice for Shabbos: it is the richest and best of breads (this is a scientific fact), so it naturally has a place on the Shabbos table. But why two loaves? Because in the Torah, when the Jews were wandering for 40 years in the wilderness (you think it's tough to park in *your* neighborhood?), God fed us with mannah, which formed on the ground every day. Every day, that is, except Shabbos, when God rests. But so we shouldn't go hungry, on Friday there was a double portion of mannah, enough for Shabbos, too. So the two challahs remind us of the double portion. This is also why the challah is covered; to keep the mannah fresh, there was a layer of dew beneath it, and another layer above; so we have the tablecloth beneath the challah, and another cloth on top. Or, if you want an even sillier explanation, we cover the challah so that it should not be embarrassed when we bless the wine first. (Aunt Yente realizes that challah is very sensitive, and always apologizes if the butter

knife tickles.)

Then there is the soup, and the chicken, not to mention the gefülte fish and the knödlach and tsimmes and ... To make it simple, there is a feast in honor of the return of our beloved Shabbos. And despite the traditional emphasis on chicken and fish, Aunt Yente knows as many Jews who do not eat meat on Shabbos. These say that on the day set aside to honor the creation of all things, animals shouldn't die to make our celebration. Aunt Yente respects these views very much, although she also sympathizes with those whose appetites overcome their scruples. The Orthodox point of view is that it is the life's ambition of every fish to be eaten by a Jew on Friday night, but Aunt Yente will wait until she sees the actual results of the poll.

Saturday morning, of course, is for services. It is traditional not to eat beforehand, so the second Shabbos meal is at noon. Again there are two challahs, and a shorter kiddush, and then often is served a dish called tchulent. (That's *tch* like cha-cha-cha, not like challah.) Tchulent is the only food Aunt Yente knows where the recipe is connected with Shabbos.

You see, kinderlach, on Shabbos, Orthodox Jews don't cook and don't light fires. In some households, a little flame is left on the stove before sundown to burn all through Shabbos, and food is heated up on it. But this can get very technical. For example, the Torah says that fire cannot be seen in the home on Shabbos. So if a flame is left on at all, it is usually covered with a pad so food can be warmed without the flame being seen. And still there are rules against changing things; raw food cannot be cooked, and soup or gravy, if it is gelled, cannot be turned back into a liquid.

So if you wanted more than lukewarm chicken for lunch, so you would think of a recipe that goes in the oven Friday, and the oven shut off, and the remaining heat of the oven would cook it through by Saturday afternoon. Now for 12 hours of cooking you don't use breast of poussin; you would take a heavy pot, and put into it beans, and carrots, and maybe some *flanken*, and garlic and onions (mandatory in all Jewish recipes), and you would leave it in the oven overnight,

and you would have invented tchulent. And then you would eat the long-cooked beans and meat, and for the rest of Shabbos afternoon you would be in no danger of wanting to do something energetic and possibly violating Shabbos.

Late in the afternoon comes a third meal, called *shaleh shiedus* by Aunt Yente and her friends (somehow from the Hebrew *sudoh sh'lishis*, third meal). This is an extra meal, added because it is a mizvoh to eat three meals on Shabbos. You want to know why? Aunt Yente was afraid of that.

So let's go back to the mannah again. In the Torah, in the verse where Moses tells the Jews to eat the extra portion of mannah on Shabbos, he uses the word "today" three times. So, according to the rabbis, it is obvious that we are commanded to eat three meals every Shabbos. As far as Aunt Yente is concerned, if they said to have fewer meals, she might complain about the logic; but as it is, she has nothing to say. *Shaleh shiedus* is an especially appropriate time to sing Shabbos songs; it also has Kabbalistic meanings which Aunt Yente will not go into, except to say that some mystics include yet a fourth meal at the very end of the day, to say farewell to our beloved Shabbos.

For Sunday, Aunt Yente recommends a good exercise program.

Aunt Yente

Cheryl in Iowa

In late December, Cheryl Orvis underwent bone-marrow transplant surgery. As of January 11, she is doing very well although still extremely weak. Her doctors say she is doing "better than anyone else at this stage" so we have much to hope for.

Your good wishes and loving notes are much appreciated. You can write to Cheryl at the following address:

Cheryl Orvis, Room 7045

Adult Bone Marrow Transplant Unit
7 Carver West

University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

If you want to send gifts, please send no live flowers and only lightweight reading matter.

Contributions

(continued from page 6)

Sanctuary Fund

Jay Ladin

Torah Fund

Don Albert, in honor of Oscar & Zelda Blechman's 50th anniversary

Library Fund

Allan Berenstein, in honor of George Lucas & Tom Rothgiesser, and in honor of Jerry Rubin on his retirement

Library Book Donations

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Frederick Fajardo
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Prayerbook Fund

Walt Leiss, in honor of his brother Albert's recovery from surgery

Social Action Fund

Ami Zusman, in honor of CSZ's UAHC Social Action Award

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Yahrzeits

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| 2 | Eleanor Pranke, grandmother of Dan Bellm | 21 | Asher Liberman, father of Shirley Liberman |
| 3 | Leon Childress, father of Joyce Amburgey | 21 | Steven Richter, member of the congregation |
| 4 | Bette Friedman, mother of Jeff Friedman | 21 | Gary Walsh, friend of Sharyn Saslafsky |
| 7 | Annie Levy, aunt of Shirley Liberman | 26 | Joseph Fichelson, grandfather of Kipp Leyser |
| 8 | (29 Shevat) Emilia Nacamulli, mother of Robert Nacamulli | 27 | Gertrude Liberman, mother of Shirley Liberman |
| 8 | Joseph Raskin, grandfather of Brian Ellis | 28 | Samuel Dreskin, father-in-law of Barry Siegel |
| 13 | Anna Pearl Gilkey, friend of Janice Macomber | | |
| 13 | Michael Silverstein, friend of Jim Dobkins | | |
| 14 | Anne Herman Shapiro, mother of Marilyn Braiger | | |
| 15 | Allan Ellis, member of the congregation and lover of Ed Pollock | | |
| 15 | Yetta and Ben Shuchat, grandparents of David Stein | | |
| 17 | Michael Feldstein, grandfather of Rena Frantz | | |

Havurah Potluck

The Family/Children's Havurah will hold a Havdallah potluck on Saturday, February 6, at 4:30 pm. The potluck will be at Marianne and Ellen's house in Oakland. For information, call them at 658-8713 or Margaret at 653-3236. Everyone is welcome to come — with or without children!



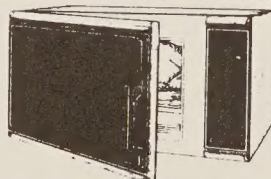
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Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

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220 DANVERS AT CASELLI, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94114

(415) 861-6932

Rabbi Yoel Kahn

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Services are held every Friday evening beginning at 8:15 pm, with an Oneg Shabbat following services. Services are generally held on the last Saturday of each month at 10:30 am — check calendar for each month.

Committee Chairs:

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Bylaws, Richard Inlander
Family/Children's Havurah, Sue Douglass & Jill Rose
Education, Bill Goldstein
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Office Hours: M, 9:30–5; Tu, Th, F, 9:30–2; W, 9:30–6.

Emergency Number: In an emergency, the Congregation can be contacted outside of office hours by calling 420-9718.

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav (Congregation of the Golden Gate) is located in the Upper Market District of San Francisco at 220 Danvers at Caselli, which is one block south of the intersection of 18th & Market streets. By public transport, take MUNI bus 33 Ashbury to 18th & Danvers and walk one block south on Danvers to Caselli.

Member Union of American Hebrew Congregations and World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations.

Oneg Sponsors

During December onegs were sponsored by the following generous people:

- 4 Education Committee, in celebration of National Jewish Book month and the CSZ Book Faire
- 11 Ritual Committee, in honor of Randy Schiller, for his assistance as sound technician during the High Holidays
- 18 Ora Prochovnick, in honor of Rena Frantz's graduation from college
- 25 Sandra Blair & Carol Cohen, in honor of Hannah Jae Cohen-Blair

All you have to do to sponsor an oneg is to think of the occasion and contact the synagogue office (861-6932). The cost of sponsoring a complete oneg is \$80 or, for partial sponsorship, \$50. You can also provide the food, flowers, etc. for a more personal touch.

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Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|----|----------------|
| 1 | Ellen Peskin | 25 | Aaron Frankel |
| 3 | David Gass | 25 | Alex Ingersoll |
| 5 | Ami Zusman | 27 | Leila Raim |
| 7 | Ida Kuluk | 28 | David Friedman |
| 7 | Mark Mendelow | 28 | Steven Gaynes |
| 8 | Sue Saperstein | 28 | Bruce Katz |
| 9 | Mark Freeman | 28 | Joel Wasser |
| 10 | Howard Taske | | |
| 11 | Robert Stern | | |
| 12 | Barry Rosen | | |
| 13 | Howard Blechman | | |
| 14 | Sue Douglass | | |
| 14 | Irene Ogus | | |
| 14 | Susan Unger | | |
| 14 | Ronald Wolberg | | |
| 15 | Russell Discher | | |
| 17 | Barry Siegel | | |
| 17 | Yael Silverberg | | |
| 21 | Sandra Lofchie | | |
| 22 | Gail Friedlander | | |
| 23 | Hal Heller | | |
| 25 | Earl Diskin | | |

Condolences

We at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav extend our sympathy to the following members who have suffered a recent loss:

To **Walter Palmer** on the recent loss of his friend, Michael Osias.

To **Steve Greenberg** on the recent loss of his friend, Emilian Reznicek.

To the congregation on the loss of our friend, Rabbi Hershel Matt.